

## Claims

1. An idea presentation and evaluation system that allows evaluators to evaluate ideas from idea submitters, the method implemented in a network and comprising:

the network receiving an idea and presenting it to a first group of evaluators, the network  
5 allowing any of the first group of evaluators to refer the idea to a second group of evaluators;

the network including a processor for monitoring interactions between the first group of evaluators and the second group of evaluators including referrals;

the system maintaining and storing data relating to the interactions and assessing a value to each of the first group of evaluators based on the interactions.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the system also assesses a value to a party  
10 presenting the idea based on the interactions.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein each of the second group of evaluators can refer the idea to a third group of evaluators.

4. The method of claim 4, wherein the system also assesses a value to a party  
15 presenting the idea based at least in part on the interactions between the first and second group of evaluators and at least in part on the second and third group of evaluators.

5. The method of claim 4, wherein the value associated with the each of the first group of evaluators is based in part on interactions between the second and third group of evaluators.

6. The method of claim 2, wherein the system assesses a value based in part on an  
20 outcome of the idea.

7. The method of claim 6, wherein the outcome includes one of whether the idea is developed, whether a resulting product is profitable, or whether a further action occurs with respect to the idea.

8. The method of claim 4, wherein the system assesses a value based in part on an outcome of the idea.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein the outcome includes one of whether the idea is developed, whether a resulting product is profitable, or whether a further action occurs with respect to the idea.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein the submitter is provided with shares to allow the submitter to allocate a value to a submitted idea.

11. The method of claim 10, wherein the evaluators are also provided with shares to allow the evaluator to provide such shares to submitters and/or to other groups of evaluators to allocate a value to the idea being evaluated.

12. The method of claim 10, wherein evaluators are allowed to borrow shares against an idea for repurchase later, thereby short selling the shares.

13. The method of claim 1, wherein the evaluators are provided with shares to allow the evaluator to provide such shares to submitters and/or to other groups of evaluators to allocate a value to the idea being evaluated.

14. The method of claim 1, wherein ideas are transmitted among evaluators in response to rules that specify one or more of what groups need to consider an idea first, what internal ratings must be generated for an idea to “proceed” to another group of evaluators, and what evaluators are allowed to be in what groups of evaluators.

15. The method of claim 1, wherein the evaluators are arranged in a hierarchy based on corporate hierarchy, education, and work experience.

16. The method of claim 1, wherein the evaluators are arranged in a hierarchy based on values assigned to evaluators based on prior evaluations of ideas and outcomes of ideas.

17. The method of claim 1, wherein the network can route contracts between evaluators and/or between evaluators and submitters.

18. The method of claim 16, wherein the contracts can be routed and executed with the parties being anonymous with respect to each other.

19. A method comprising:

maintaining information about idea submitters and evaluators who evaluate submitted ideas;

assigning values to the idea submitter and the evaluators based on ideas submitted and evaluated, allocations of value being assigned to ideas and interactions between submitters and evaluators; and

causing changes in the values based on an outcome of the idea and further interactions between submitters and evaluators.

20. The method of claim 19, wherein the values are convertible into equity and/or cash.

21. The method of claim 19, wherein the values are convertible into one or more of vacation, time off, an award, publication of achievement, and public acknowledgment.

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22. An idea management system that receives ideas from submitters, controls the routing of those ideas between different groups of evaluators of ideas, maintains records of who receives and evaluates ideas, and assigns values to the submitters of ideas, the evaluators of ideas and the ideas themselves based on their interactions between each other and the outcome of the  
5 idea.

23. The system of claim 22, wherein the system includes shares that allow submitters to assign a value to when the idea is submitted.

24. The system of claim 22, wherein the system includes shares that allow evaluators to assign a value when the evaluator refers to idea to other evaluators and/or to provide shares to  
10 submitters.

25. The system of claim 22, wherein the evaluators can modify the ideas before referring the modified ideas to other evaluators.

26. The system of claim 22, wherein the evaluators are arranged in a hierarchy based on corporate hierarchy, education, and work experience.

15 27. The system of claim 22, wherein the system includes the ability to route contracts between the parties.

28. The system of claim 27, therein the contracts are routed such that each party does not necessarily know the identity of the other party with which it is contracting.

29. The system of claim 22, wherein at least some of the submitters and evaluators  
20 are kept anonymous from each other.

30. The system of claim 22, wherein the outcome of idea includes whether it is adopted and any resulting monetary value from the adoption.

31. The system of claim 24, wherein the system allows wherein evaluators to borrow shares against an idea for repurchase later, thereby short selling the shares.

32. The method of claim 11, wherein a custodian maintains a third-party, independent record of the shares transacted.

5 33. The method of claim 17, wherein the contracts are made available to individual submitters and evaluators based on the contract parties' group membership or on the contract parties' position in a hierarchy based on one of corporate hierarchy, education, and work experience and prior evaluations of ideas and outcomes of ideas.

34. The system of claim 24, wherein a custodian maintains a third-party, independent record of the shares transacted.

35. The system of claim 22, wherein the evaluators are arranged in a hierarchy based on values assigned to evaluators based on prior evaluations of ideas and outcomes of ideas

36. The method of claim 27, wherein the contracts are made available to individual submitters and evaluators based on the contract parties' group membership or on the contract parties' position in a hierarchy based on one of corporate hierarchy, education, and work experience and prior evaluations of ideas and outcomes of ideas.